

FAIR HOUSING

Update

Volume 9, Issue 1

January 2004

New Fair Housing Guidebook for Property Owners and Managers

Got a fair housing question? Worrying whether a tenancy action might violate fair housing laws? Has a tenant accused you of discrimination and you're wondering what to do next?

A free guidebook is now available for property owners and managers, titled **Fair Housing in Washington State: Top 100 Frequently Asked Questions & Answers for Property Owners and Managers**. Published by the Fair Housing Agencies of Washington State, this manual outlines the basics of fair housing laws, offers guidance for establishing nondiscriminatory rental policies and provides technical assistance for problematic common situations.

This handbook is organized to follow the normal flow of rental business, starting with advertising and the application and screening process, and moving on to tenancy rules, evictions, etc. Other chapters address special topics, such as issues involving families with children, harassment, people with disabilities and more. The question and answer format makes the booklet easy to navigate, so you can quickly find the answer you need. The Fair Housing Agencies recommend that every property manager and owner have this valuable resource on their office shelf!

For copies of this free guidebook, contact the King County Office of Civil Rights (KCOCR) by calling 206-296-7592

(TTY 296-7596) or by e-mailing civil-rights.OCR@metrokc.gov.

If the new guidebook does not address your situation or you just need more guidance on a particular issue, you can contact your local fair housing agency. Their staff can provide you with technical assistance, explaining the fair housing laws and how they might apply to your situation. To locate the agency whose laws cover your property, see the online agency chart at www.metrokc.gov/dias/ocre/FHlaws.htm.

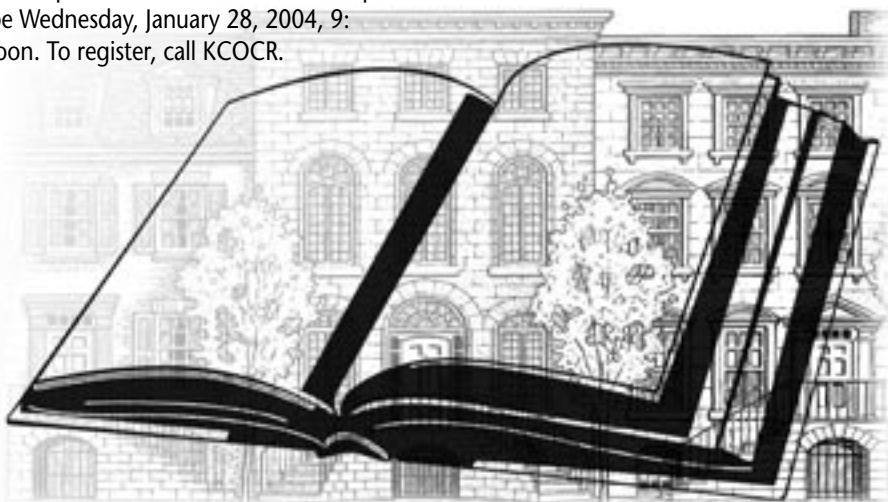
Want fair housing training for your staff?

Free 3-hour workshops are offered four times a year at the Jackson Federal Building in downtown Seattle. For more information about these training sessions, see the workshop Web page at www.metrokc.gov/dias/ocre/qtrtrain.htm. The next workshop will be Wednesday, January 28, 2004, 9:00-noon. To register, call KCOCR.

Sample policies and posters also available for housing providers: The Fair Housing Agencies of Washington State have developed a series of free sample policies:

- Tenant on Tenant Harassment
- Reasonable Accommodations for People with Disabilities
- Service Animals

You can duplicate these sample policies for use at your properties or treat them as guidelines for drafting your own policies and procedures. Copies of the policies are available from your local fair housing agency or online at www.metrokc.gov/dias/ocre/FHpolices.htm. Each agency also has free fair housing posters that you can post in your rental office.



Tacoma Human Rights

Washington Landlord Pays \$7,000 to Tenant After Retaliation Charge Filed

By Anita Smith

A landlord in the North end of Tacoma agreed to pay \$7,000 to a disabled tenant after allegedly retaliating against her for filing a Fair Housing Complaint with Tacoma Human Rights and Human Services. In her initial complaint she alleged discrimination based on disability when the property management refused to allow her boyfriend to act as a caregiver without adding him to the lease. The Complainant stated that she did not want her boyfriend added to her lease because he had his own home and she wished to maintain hers in her name alone.

After filing the initial complaint, the Complainant requested a two bedroom apartment so that her son could live with her. After making her request the manager allegedly informed her that she would not give her a two bedroom apartment unless she withdrew the complaint she filed. The manager also made remarks to the investigator that could be taken as retaliatory in nature.

At the culmination of the investigation, the Respondents agreed to settle the case, paying the Complainant \$7,000. Respondents also agreed to two years of quarterly monitoring, Fair Housing training for 50% of the office staff, posting Fair Housing posters, one in the manager's office and one in the laundry room. They also agreed to disseminate a Fair Housing/Disability Request packet to all occupied units and all new tenants for a period of one year, and other acts in the interest of the public.

The Complainant expressed a great deal of gratitude to the agency stating that she had been discriminated against many times over the years due to her disability and she finally decided to do something about it. When her landlord tried to terminate her tenancy, in what she felt was retaliation, she said she doesn't know what she would've done if it had not been for the assistance of a Fair Housing Agency such as Tacoma Human Rights and Human Services to fight for her rights.

King County Office of Civil Rights

Local civil rights web site wins awards

by Roxanne Vierra

The King County Office of Civil Rights (KCOCR) recently received a 2003 National Association of Counties (NACo) Achievement Award for its fair housing Web site. The program was recognized for excellence and promotion of responsible, responsive, and effective county government.

OCR's mission is to "to eliminate unlawful discrimination through education, mediation, and enforcement that is responsive to a diverse King County." Recognizing that the Internet had very little information regarding Fair Housing, KCOCR developed its Web pages to meet this need.

This Web site provides extensive information about nondiscrimination laws for property owners, property managers, tenants and others. It contains many helpful resources for those in the housing industry, such as information about free fair housing workshops, copies of sample tenancy policies that comply with fair housing laws, guidance on providing reasonable accommodations for disabled tenants, and numerous "frequently asked questions." Visit www.metrokc.gov/dias/ocre/ho.htm to see this outstanding fair housing site.

The Fair Housing Center of South Puget Sound

Local fair housing agency wins national award

by Dixie Shaw

The Fair Housing Center of South Puget Sound, a private non-profit agency located in Tacoma, was recently notified by The Equal Rights Center of Washington D.C. that it has been selected as 1 of 14 housing agencies nationally to receive the Fair Housing Best Practices award for innovative programs in 2002. These awards are made possible by a grant awarded to The Equal Rights Center by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

The 14 award recipients were selected by a national advisory committee, which included leaders and experts from the housing industry, public interest groups and both rural and urban non-profit fair housing agencies. The winners were evaluated on such factors as how well the program assisted underserved and difficult-to-reach communities, how easily the program can be replicated, how it demonstrated leadership, and how well it collaborated with other agencies to maximize resources.

The Fair Housing Center was awarded the Fair Housing Best Practices award for its Fair Housing ESL Curriculum designed to educate new immigrant ESL students on how to identify housing discrimination, understand fair housing laws and enforcement options, and increase the capacity of students to communicate with landlords, managers, and fair housing representatives. The Fair Housing Center, utilizing funding from HUD, partnered with a local technical college to design the ESL curriculum, which has been adopted by community and technical colleges and immigrant-advocacy organizations throughout the State of Washington.

The Fair Housing Center of South Puget Sound focuses on complaint investigation, advocacy, education and information and referral to aid in its mission of ending illegal discrimination in housing for residents of Western Washington and can be reached at 253-274-9523 or toll free at 888-766-8800.

City of Tacoma Human Rights and Human Services 18th Annual Fair Housing Conference

“Current Trends in Fair Housing”

Wednesday, April 21, 2004

Time	A	B	C	D
8:00-9:00	Registration			
9:00-9:30	Welcoming Remarks			
9:30-10:00	Main Speaker			
10:45-11:45	Predatory Lending: Lending, an Overview.	Rules & Policies: Reasonable Accommodation & Service Animals	Top 100 Frequently Asked Questions & Answers for Property Owners and Managers	Acceptance Criteria & Customer Service
11:45-1:00	Lunch			
1:00-2:00	Predatory Lending: How to Identify Predatory Activity.	Rules & Policies: Domestic Violence	Top 100 Frequently Asked Questions & Answers for Property Owners and Managers (repeated)	Crime Free Housing
2:15-3:15	Predatory Lending: What's Being Done?	Rules & Policies: Tenant on Tenant Harassment	Top 100 Frequently Asked Questions & Answers for Property Owners and Managers (repeated)	Advertising
3:15-4:00	Closing Remarks			

**City of Tacoma Human Rights and Human Services 18th Annual Fair Housing Conference
“Current Trends in Fair Housing” Wednesday, April 21, 2004**

Name: _____

Company Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ State _____ Zip Code: _____

Daytime Phone: _____ Fax: _____

e-mail: _____

Please circle the classes you wish to attend:

Session	Time	Class	Class	Class	Class
Session 1	10:45-11:45	A	B	C	D
Session 2	1:00-2:00	A	B	C	D
Session 3	2:15-3:15	A	B	C	D

Will you need an accommodation for a disability?

☐ Interpreter ☐ Signer ☐ Other _____

Make checks payable to:

City Treasurer for \$65 if registering prior to April 1, 2004.

After April 1, 2004, and at the door, \$75

City of Tacoma Human Rights and Human Services
747 Market St., Suite 836,
Tacoma, WA 98402

(253) 591-5151 • fax: (253) 591-5050

Upcoming Events

March 17 & 18, 2004 Crime Free Housing Program

City of Tacoma

Central Wastewater Treatment Facility
Transmission Conference Room
2201 Portland Avenue
Tacoma, Wa 98421

8 a.m. - 5 p.m.

For additional information contact Mary
Beth Riggs at 253-591-5160

April 28, 2004 Fair Housing Training

Provided by HUD, WSHRC, SOCR, and
KCOCR

Jackson Federal Building
South Auditorium, 4th Floor
915 Second Avenue, Seattle, WA
9 a.m. - Noon

For additional information contact Bailey
delongh at 206-296-7592

How to reach us

Fair Housing Center of South Puget Sound

253-274-9523 / 1-888-766-8800
TTY 253-274-9523

King County Office of Civil Rights

206-296-7592, TTY 206-296-7596
Website: www.metrokc.gov/dias/ocre

Northwest Fair Housing Alliance

509-325-2665 / 1-800-200-FAIR

Seattle Office for Civil Rights

206-684-4500, TTY 206-684-4503
Website: www.cityofseattle.net/civilrights

Tacoma Human Rights and Human Services Dept.

253-591-5151, TTY 253-591-5153
Website: www.cityoftacoma.org/HRHS

U.S. Dept. of Housing & Urban Development

206-220-5170, TTY 206-220-5185
Website: www.hud.gov/offices/ftheo

Washington State

Human Rights Commission

360-753-6770 / 1-800-233-3247
TTY 1-800-300-7525
Website: www.wa.gov/hrc

About this publication

The Washington State Fair Housing
Update is a quarterly publication of Fair
Housing Assistance Program (FHAP)
Agencies and non-profit fair housing
organizations



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City of Tacoma Human Rights and Human Services 18th Annual Fair Housing Conference

“Current Trends in Fair Housing”

Wednesday, April 21, 2004

Featured topics include:

- Predatory Lending
- Advertising
- Policy/Rule Making
- Domestic Violence
- Crime Free Housing ... and more

**6.5 continuing education clock hours provided through
Clover Park Technical College.**

Cost: \$65 per person

To Register call (253) 591-5151